THE UNIVERSAL FELLOWSHIP OF METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES

ALERT

News from the UFMCC
on AIDS Legislation, Education, Research and Treatment.

November 1996

UFMCC AIDS Ministry at the Quilt Display -- October 10-13, 1996

(By Rev. Steve Pieters)

[The following is excerpted from the daily journal Rev. Pieters wrote and sent out to the UFMCC E-mail List during the Quilt Display weekend.]

October 11, 1996 -- I arrived at the Mall at 8 a.m. to join thousands of people in viewing the opening of the Quilt. Teen-agers unfolded the panels and laid them on the ground. Jim Plankenhorn and I stepped out into the midst of the Quilt when they were done, and wandered up and down the 15 city blocks of quilt panels, constantly seeing names we know.

In searching for the panel of Rev. Larry Uhrig, Jim's partner, we found not only his panel, but a whole section full of panels for MCC leaders, both clergy and laity. The enormity of UFMCC's loss was brought home to me again in a most poignant and painful way. There were panels with long lists of our clergy who have died, as well as individual panels for countless clergy and lay members of MCC from around the world.

I remembered walking onto the Quilt with Rev. Ron Russell-Coons at the first showing in Washington, when it covered somewhat less than a football field. We both burst into tears back then. When I found one of Ron's panels today, I stared in quiet respect and wondered why my tears had dried up. The feelings of loss are even more intense, so many more people have died, but I somehow couldn't let the grief loose.

At noon, I checked in at the Capitol stage to read names. Reading names, gazing at the entire length of the Quilt stretching in front of me, it was difficult to absorb the enormity of loss represented on the Mall. I could hear my voice hanging in the air as I spoke the names of persons I didn't know, but each one of whom had loved ones who painstakingly memorialized them with the time and energy of creating a panel.

UFMCC AIDS Ministry has an exhibit all weekend of the Quilt Display. The exhibit is staffed by volunteers from D.C. area MCC's, supervised by Mr. Jim Plakenhorn. Our exhibit booth is being swamped with people grabbing our pamphlets and order forms.

(Quilt Display, see page 2)

The Ten Commandments of Living Long and Well with HIV

(By Lark Lands, Ph.D.)

Commandment #1: Manage your disease. Do the work.

Subtitle: Avoid the Humpty Dumpty Syndrome. We can't keep waiting for people to fall apart so that we can try to patch them back together. There are two parts to this commandment.

#1 You don't wait to start managing this disease. Begin now.

#2 You'd better understand what it really means to manage a disease. It's hard work, but it's worth it.

Commandment #2: Eat what's good for you.

If you don't have the nutrients, you can't build the T cells or any other immune cells. For that matter, you can't build any cell in the body without these building blocks. You've got to put good levels of protein, good levels of unrefined complex carbohydrates, lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, and moderate amounts of only the good kinds of fats in your body every day, and you have to wash all that down with lots of good healthful liquids. That's the way you give your body the building blocks it needs to keep up the immense battle against HIV. And always make sure the food you eat and the water you drink is safe!

Commandment #3: Do everything necessary to help your body digest food and use it properly.

Even if you're eating the right things, it won't do you any good if you don't have good digestion and the ability to use the nutrients. Many

(Ten Commandments, see page 2)

Ten Commandments

(continued from page 1)

people need to improve how their bodies handle food by supplementing with hydrochloric acid, pancreatic enzymes, vegetable enzymes, acidophilus, biotin, L-carnitine, and L-glutamine.

Commandment #4: Supplement your good diet with the nutrients that will help you have slower disease progression and a lot fewer symptoms along the way, including optimal levels of antioxidants.

Remember: John James, the highly respected editor of AIDS Treatment News, reviewing one of the important nutrient studies, summarized his review by saying that research has shown that supplying the right level of nutrients in the body may be associated with greater reduced progression of HIV disease and better improvements in long-term survival than any anti-HIV drug tested to date. And, in addition, nutrients can reduce or eliminate or contribute to eliminating many symptoms such as fatigue, skin problems, neuropathy, digestive problems, memory or other mental problems, wasting, and others.

Commandment #5: Protect the body in every way possible from the damage that infections cause and give the body what it needs to repair itself when the damage does occur.

First, use the best available treatments; then supply the particular nutrients that the body can use to repair itself. In particular, repair the intestines with zinc, beta-carotene, vitamin B6, vitamin E, bioflavonoids, vitamin C, and, especially, L-glutamine. If necessary, use doses of up to 30-40 grams of L-glutamine per day until repair is effected, followed by lower doses for maintenance. You can't absorb nutrients or drugs if you don't keep your intestines healthy.

Commandment #6: Do prophylaxis, where appropriate, and add to your pharmaceutical prophylactic regimen the nutrients and natural therapeutics that help to protect you from infections, and that help you to fight them when you get them.

Important nutrients for protection from infections: L-glutamine (intestinal, lung, and cervicovaginal infections), acidophilus (Candida overgrowth and other intestinal infections), garlic and oregano extract (Candida overgrowth), folic acid (anal or cervical cancer), and a good level of nutrients in general. Remember: Your body's response to any infectious agent or abnormal cell is absolutely dependent on the nutrients needed for competent immune response. Thomas McKeown, M.D. says "deficiency of almost any of the essential nutrients may have a marked effect on the manner in which the host responds to an infectious agent. The same infection may be mild or even unapparent in a well-nourished host, but virulent and sometimes fatal in one that is malnourished."

Commandment #7: Take the best available antivirals in the best possible combinations and, while you do it, protect your body from their side effects.

We finally have antiviral approaches that are worth doing - combination antiviral therapy with the best available antivirals - and the viral load test to help determine when they're needed. The more you can use antivirals

(Ten Commandments, see page 4)

Quilt Display...

(continued from page 1)

I hurried back to the hotel for the plenary luncheon of the U.S. National Skills Building Conference. The keynote speaker was Ram Daas, who addressed "the mystery of suffering and death."

After lunch, I attended break-out sessions, on "Grant-writing 101", and "Psycho-social Issues Affecting HIV Negative Gay Men." It is very exciting to see large numbers of MCC members present at this conference.

October 12, 1996 -- The undisputed highlight of today was the Candlelight March and Memorial this evening. We began on the steps of the U.S. Capitol as over a hundred thousand people gathered before sunset. As night fell, a huge field of candles were lit as we stepped off onto Pennsylvania Ave., down Consitution Ave., and past the White House to the Lincoln Memorial. "Waves" of lifted candles and voices moved up and down the march as we remembered our loved ones who have died.

My eyes brimmed with tears of pride as Rev. Candace Shultis, pastor of MCC Washington D.C. offered the invocation at the Lincoln Memorial. My pride continued to swell as the beautiful voices of the MCC-D.C. Gospel Choir sang "Amazing Grace" with Chaka Khan. The voices of MCC-D.C. and their pastor commanded the respect of this massive crowd, remembering all the talent, beauty, knowledge and life that has been extinguished by AIDS.

After a number of speeches from "the faces of AIDS", Elizabeth Taylor asked us to extinguish our candles as we spoke the names of those we've lost. The crowd dispersed in reverent silence.

The day began for me with the Annual Meeting of the U.S. AIDS National Interfaith Network (ANIN). It was a great opportunity to connect with many old friends. Other churches continue to look to UFMCC for leadership and guidance in AIDS Ministry, primarily because of our largely gay/lesbian membership, and the disproportionately high incidence of HIV among our membership.

At the plenary luncheon, 1600 people heard that Glaxo Wellcome has increased the price of AZT and 3TC by 2.9%. There was such outrage at this drug company, that the company representatives had to shut down their exhibit booth and leave the conference.

The keynote speaker was Ric Munoz, a long distance runner who has survived nine years of living with HIV. He is most well known for the "Just Do It" commercial featuring him running and "pushing his body to the limit" as an HIV positive gay man.

In the afternoon session, I attended a workshop on "Activism, Advocacy, and AIDS on the Internet." I learned many valuable tools to take back to UFMCC Global Headquarters as we continue to develop UFMCC's presence on the Internet.

October 13, 1996 -- The final day of the Skills Building Conference and the Quilt Display began with one last break-out session. For this session, I led a seminar on "How to do a Peer Education Program for Gay Youth," in which I presented the PEP/MCC training manual and

(Quilt Display, see page 3)

Quilt Display...

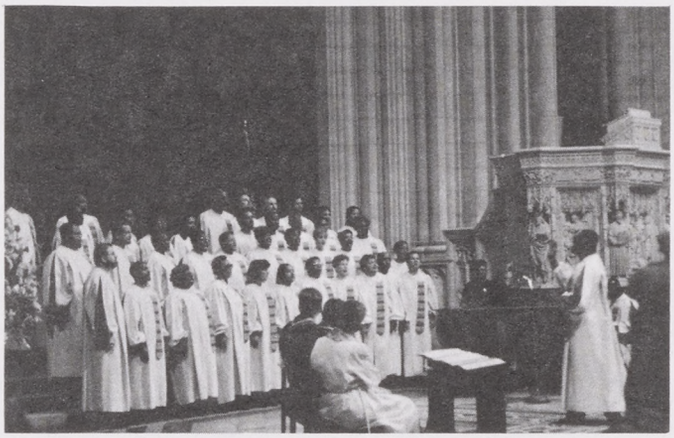
(continued from page 2)

video. The evaluations were uniformly positive.

At the closing plenary brunch, the first keynote speaker was Cristina Saralegui, journalist and talk show host. She talked about a show she did on gay and lesbian marriages. The response from her vast audience was overwhelmingly negative and "hate-filled." Although millions cried out against her "immorality," her sponsor, AT&T, and the Univision Network stood behind her. She said, "I will continue!" and the audience roared its love and support.

The second keynote speaker was Rev. Cecil Williams, "Liberation Pastor" of Glide Memorial Methodist Church in San Francisco. He talked about his first Sunday at Glide, where 30 members were about to close the church. He said, "They were good people...so good, they were good for nothing! Their cross was too clean. I told them 'You need a dirty cross, one that is covered with suffering and hurt.'" He went on to describe their growth from 30 to over 7,200 members.

I went back to the Quilt for one more walk-through. I found more and more MCC members' panels, and finally the grief broke loose, and I cried the tears I've needed to shed all weekend. Tonight's Interfaith Service of Prayer and Healing, "The Journey Home," was one of the most awesome worship experiences I have ever been involved with. I was proud of what a powerful presence MCC had in the service, thanks to Rev. Candace Shultis who served on the Planning Committee.

Over 4,000 people jammed the Washington National Cathedral, with people standing all along the sides and around the huge columns. The service consisted of prayers, readings, and music that soared through the

air. I was honored to be the reader of the Gospel (Luke 6:17-21). Several people commented how meaningful it was that a representative of MCC, a gay man living with AIDS, was the only one who spoke the name of Jesus.

The most thrilling part of the service was the music. MCC-DC's Gospel Choir had the entire congregation on their feet clapping and shouting and singing! The Washington Gay Men's Chorus moved many to tears of joy and remembrance. The organist stunned the congregation with "The Revelation of Saint John the Divine."

The service ended with a Litany of Commitment for the Journey Home and a blessing from the Dean of the Cathedral. We recessed to "We Shall Overcome". So many were overwhelmed by the beauty and the spirit of the service, that we were hugging each other for a half hour after the two hour service. It was the perfect culmination of an extraordinary four days of grief, love, learning, and transformation. ♦

World AIDS Day Resource Booklet

The theme for this year's World AIDS Day is "One World, One Hope." World AIDS Day is observed each year on December 1. In 1996, World AIDS Day falls on Sunday, and offers every MCC the opportunity to feature HIV/AIDS issues, especially as it affects us as an international denomination.

For more information and a resource booklet on World AIDS Day, contact: American Association for World Health, 1825 K Street, NW, Suite 1208, Washington, DC 20006; phone 202-466-5883; or fax 202-446-5896.

UFMCC AIDS Ministry encourages all MCC congregations to join with the U.S. AIDS National Interfaith Network in their World AIDS Day Activities. ANIN asks us to "sign on to the Council Call," written by the Council of U.S. National Relgious AIDS Networks. Copies of the "Council Call" are available from ANIN by calling 202-842-0010, or through UFMCC AIDS Ministry, phone 310-360-8640; e-mail UfmccHQ@aol.com.

ANIN also requests that all houses of worship "ring their bells 16 times at 2:00 PM local time on Sunday, December 1, 1996, in recognition of the 16 years of the HIV/AIDS pandemic." For more information, call ANIN at 202-842-0010. ♦

UFMCC AIDS Ministry Wins Ryan White Youth Services Award

UFMCC AIDS Ministry has been awarded one of the Ryan White Youth Service Awards for the Peer Education Program of the Metropolitan Community Churches (PEP/MCC). Rev. Steve Pieters, Field Director of UFMCC AIDS Ministry and one of the creators of PEP/MCC, will be flown to Washington, D.C. on December 6, 1996, to receive the award at a gala dinner and celebration at the Hard Rock Cafe.

Other honorees include Mary Fisher, the daytime drama *General Hospital*, the ABC Afterschool Specials, and the Names Project.

UFMCC will receive the Sarah Reed Faith Community Award, named after a Virginia mother whose experiences in her congregation after her son (Danny Reed, young peer educator living with AIDS) became public about his illness, led her to leave that congregation and to join MCC. ♦

Ten Commandments

(continued from page 4)

to suppress the viral load and let the body regain its immune function, the better off you are and the longer you'll be able to fight off infections. You must have good nutritional status for the body to use drugs effectively. Also, some nutrients may help protect you from the side effects of certain drugs. For AZT: B1, B3, B6, B12, E, magnesium, zinc. For bone-marrow suppressive drugs, in general: recombinant human growth hormone, anabolic steroids. For liver-toxic drugs, alpha-lipoic acid, NAC, vitamin C, carnitinc.

Commandment #8: Handle the hormone problems of this disease:

For both men and women, maintaining testosterone and using, where appropriate, anabolic steroids and/or recombinant human growth hormone may help prevent the loss of the lean tissue that keeps you alive, while helping you look better, function better, and feel better. Women may also need female hormone replacement.

Commandment #9: Exercise.

Just do it. You need to build up the muscles with progressive resistance exercise like weight training. That's what gives you a body with plenty of the lean tissue that you need for survival.

Commandment #10: Program the mind toward healing.

The power of the mind to boost the body toward healing is amazing. And the power of hope is one of the best tools you can have for long-term survival. Bob Publicover, incredibly long-term (two decades and counting) survivor: *"Never give up, never give up, never give up."*

[Lark Lands, M.S., Ph.D. is a health educator, consultant, and the author of Positively Well: Living with HIV as a Chronic, Manageable, Survivable Disease. *She has given her Positively Well seminar to thousands of people worldwide and is a frequent speaker at international, national, state, and local AIDS conferences. In both her seminars and private health education practice, she attempts to provide a base of information to educate HIV+ people on the elements needed for a comprehensive health plan. This fact sheet is a philosophical overview of the type of approach to living with HIV that is described in depth in Dr. Lands' book:* Positively Well: Living with HIV as a Chronic, Manageable, Survivable Disease - *A practical guide to nutrition, drugs and therapeutic agents, energy therapics, psychoimmunity, and hope! [expected publication date is late 1996]. To order the book, please call: 800-542-8102, 9 am to 5 pm Eastern Time.]* ♦

HIV-Related Websites

XIth International Conference on AIDS (abstract online): www.interchg.ubc.ca/aids11/aids96.html
AIDS Action Committee: www.aac.org
AIDS Care Givers Support Network: www.vive.com/connect/acsn/acsnhome.htm
AIDS Clinical Trials Information Service: www.actis.org
AIDS research Information Center: www.critpath.org/aric/aricinc.htm
AIDS Treatment News Online: www.immunet.org/atn
AIDS Weekly: www.newsfile.com/la.html
AmFAR (American Foundation for AIDS Research: www.amfar.org
Arts & Understanding: www.aumag.org
Ask Noah About AIDS: www.noah.cuny.edu/aids/aids.html
Being Alive: www.mbay.net/-bngalive
BETA: www.sfaf.org/beta.html
The Body: www.thebody.com
CDC AIDS Clearinghouse: www.cdcnac.org
CDC AIDS Page: www.cdc.gov/diseases/aids.html
Critical Path AIDS Project: www.critpath.org
Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC): www.gmhc.org
HIV/AIDS Treatment Information Service: www.hivatis.org
The HIV Info Web: www.jri.org/infoweb
IAPAC: www.IAPAC.org
MedScape - AIDS page: www.medscape.com/home/medscape-AIDS/Medscape-AIDS.html

New Resource: *The Nonprofit Guide to the Internet*

UFMCC AIDS Ministry recommends an exciting new resource, *The Nonprofit Guide to the Internet*, by Robin Zeff, Ph.D. This new book enables churches and other nonprofits to take advantage of the limitless resources of the Internet. Through this book, you can learn to navigate the World Wide Web; access specific resources, databases and web sites needed to stay current and competivite; as well as design your own nonprofit web site.

The Nonprofit Guide to the Internet teaches you how to access grant information, do fundraising, expand your outreach, and gather information about your legal rights on the information superhighway. The book:

*Surveys the hardware and software necessary to getting online.

*Explores the potential of cyberfundraising with real world examples from online campaigns.

*Devotes an entire chapter to cyberspace law for nonprofits.

*Illustrates nonprofit uses of the web with case studies, charts, and dozens of screen shots.

*Contains a valuable multimedia bibliography, a handy glossary, and a directory of nonprofit web sites.

For information about ordering *The Nonprofit Guide to the Internet*, call 1-800-753-0655, ext. 4457, or write to La-Dana Jenkins, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10158. The book costs $34.95 plus applicable taxes, shipping and handling. ♦

HIV-Related Websites

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MedWeb: www.emory.edu/medweb/medweb.aids. html
The Names Project: www.aidsquilt.org
NAPWA (Daily Updates): www.thecure.org
NIAID AIDS Gopher: gopher://odie.niaid.nih. gov:70/11/aids
Positive Nation: www.positivenation.co.uk
POZ Magazine: www.POZ.com
Project Inform: www.projinf.org